



CITY OF MANCHESTER

Department of Health

1528 Elm Street
Manchester, NH 03101-1350
Telephone: (603) 624-6466
Administrative FAX: (603) 624-6466
Community Health FAX (603) 624-6584
www.ci.manchester.nh.us

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Public Health Director

Richard DiPentima, R.N., M.P.H.
Deputy Public Health Director

PRESS RELEASE

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CONTACT

Fred Rusczek or Richard DiPentima
624-6466 x302

Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) Found in Manchester Crow

Manchester, NH – The Manchester Health Department announced today that a crow collected in Manchester on August 1, 2005 has tested positive for Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE).

Like West Nile Virus, Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) is a mosquito-borne viral disease that mainly infects birds. In humans, EEE is a rare but serious disease that can be acquired from the bite of an infected mosquito. On average, there are only about 5 human cases of EEE reported nationwide per year. In the last 40 years only been 1 human case has been reported in New Hampshire. The virus that causes EEE is usually found only in birds and in the mosquitoes that bite birds. The risk of getting EEE is highest from late July through September.

Symptoms range from mild flu-like illness to encephalitis (inflammation of the brain), coma and death. In severe cases, the first symptoms of EEE are high fever (103° to 106°F), stiff neck, headache, and lack of energy. These symptoms show up two to ten days after infection.

According to Fred Rusczek, MPH, Manchester's Public Health Director, "Given the low incidence of EEE in people, no extraordinary public health efforts are warranted at this time. However, we want to reiterate the importance of preventing mosquito bites, and eliminating mosquito breeding areas." The Health Department typically steps up community education about mosquito borne illnesses once they are identified in birds during the summer mosquito season.

The public is being asked to continue to report sightings of dead crows, blue jays, cardinals, finches and starlings to the Manchester Health Department. If the birds are appropriate specimens for testing, they will be collected by Health Department staff and submitted to the New Hampshire Public Health Laboratory.

The Manchester Health Department has established an information line to assist citizens with concerns and questions about WNV and EEE, as well as to receive reports of dead birds. The phone number is 624-6466, Ext. #325 and is staffed during normal business hours. After normal business hours, citizens can leave a voice message that will be returned the next business day.



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Prevention Guidelines for West Nile Virus and Eastern Equine Encephalitis

1. Eliminate standing water and other mosquito breeding locations.

- Remove old tires from your property.
- Dispose of tin cans, plastic containers, ceramic pots or other containers. Don't overlook containers that have become overgrown by aquatic vegetation.
- Drill holes in the bottom of containers that are left outside.
- Make sure roof gutters are clean and properly draining.
- Clean and chlorinate swimming pools and hot tubs. If not in use, keep empty and covered and keep cover free of standing water.
- Aerate garden ponds or stock them with fish.
- Turn over wheelbarrows and wading pools when not in use.
- Change the water in birdbaths at least twice weekly.
- Remind or help neighbors to eliminate breeding sites on their property.

2. Be aware of where mosquitoes live and breed and keep them from entering your home.

- Mosquitoes lay their eggs in stagnant water. Weeds, tall grass, and bushes provide an ideal outdoor home for the adult *Culex pipiens* mosquito (the common northern house mosquito), which is most commonly associated with West Nile Virus.
- Mosquitoes can enter homes through unscreened windows or doors, or broken screens. Make sure that all doors and windows have tight-fitting screens and repair or replace all screens in your home that have tears or holes.

3. Protect yourself from mosquito bites.

- If outside during evening, nighttime, or dawn hours when mosquitoes are most active and likely to bite, children and adults should wear protective clothing such as long pants, long-sleeved shirts, and socks.
- Consider using an effective insect repellent containing DEET (N,N-diethyl-methyl-meta-tolamide). Use a repellent containing 10% or less DEET for children, and no more than 30% DEET for adults. Use DEET containing insect repellents according to the manufacture's directions. Children should not apply DEET to themselves. Repellents that contain Picaridin or oil of lemon eucalyptus have also been determined to be effective.
- Vitamin B, ultrasonic devices, incense, and bug zappers have not been shown to be effective in preventing mosquito bites.

For more information, contact the Manchester Health Department's West Nile Virus information line at 624-6466 x325.